

Felix C. Vargas, Jr.
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Biographic Summary

Felix Vargas is a rancher and a leader in the U.S. military veteran community, based in Pasco, Washington, and with an office in Arlington, Virginia. He serves as Senior Adviser to the American G.I. Forum of the United States. As such, Mr. Vargas works actively with Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), the U.S. Government, and the private sector to draw attention to the newest generation of young soldiers with physical disabilities resulting from their valiant service in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to promote their full integration into the U.S. economy as professionals.

Mr. Vargas served as a career Foreign Service Officer in the U.S. Department of State from 1973 to 1999. During his 26-year career with the State Department, he served in sensitive diplomatic missions as a Political Officer in six countries: Mexico, Chile, El Salvador, Germany, Austria, and Bosnia. In the latter assignment and during the period 18 December 1995 to 23 October 1997, Mr. Vargas served as the U.S. Political Advisor to the NATO Commander in MND-North (Tuzla), with a follow-on assignment as the Deputy Political Advisor to the SFOR Commander (Sarajevo), both responsible for implementing the Dayton Peace Accords ending the Bosnian civil war. In the latter position, he held the NATO grade A-6, equivalent to that of Major General in the U.S. Armed Forces. His duties included advising NATO commanders on political developments associated with the presence and operations of the historic NATO-led mission in Bosnia, directing efforts in northern Bosnia to restart political dialogue among former warring factions and playing a key role in starting up economic reconstruction and freedom of movement by civilians displaced by the war. Mr. Vargas also held senior positions in the State Department, Washington, D.C. He received two Superior Honor Awards from the State Department, recognizing his achievements in El Salvador and Bosnia. The Supreme Allied Commander of NATO also presented him the NATO Achievement Award for his work in Bosnia. Mr. Vargas retired from the State Department in September 1999.

Mr. Vargas also served a full career in the U.S. Army Reserve, retiring in May 2001, at the rank of Colonel. During his 30-year Army Reserve career, he served in numerous command and staff positions in Washington, D.C. and Europe. Mr. Vargas served 19 months in the Vietnam War as a U.S. Army Ranger and Special Forces Officer. He holds the U.S. Legion of Merit and several combat decorations, including two Bronze Stars, two Air Medals, three military campaign ribbons, and several Vietnamese awards.

Mr. Vargas graduated in 1967 from the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington with a B.A. Degree in Political Science and a U.S. Army ROTC Commission as a Second Lieutenant. He is a Distinguished Graduate of the National War College, Ft. McNair, Washington, D.C., class of 1992.